I am going to pick up Leibniz where I left off; for the last three years he has been my regular autumn reading. First I read all the little treatises and some of the letters; then the first part of the *Theodicee;* now I have begun the *New Essays.* For two autumns I also read Fichte; shall I have the time this year? I took with me, just in case, *The Doctrine of Science.* Every autumn likewise I read Dickens, Turgenyev, or Eliot, but especially Dickens, whom I like to read more than anyone else at the end of the day, on my return from a long walk in the woods; then in slippers beside the fire while drinking tea and always in that same big green armchair at La Roque.

And the sound of the dinner bell, and the shadow cast by my mother seated reading at the big table. . . . Is all that over?

Every year at this time a refrain of all my old devotions and ardors is reawakened; I become a good boy again.

I have ordered from Germany a little volume of Lavater. Why is he not better known, that so ardent and so affectionate spirit of whom Goethe said that he was "irreplaceable," and whom the invalided Novalis read in his last years? At the beginning of Tieck's preface stands the following, which I should set at the opening of my translation:

"*I* say it on each of my birthdays; I think it each day of my life: to meditate upon myself is the life of life, and we devote so little meditation to this subject! How rarely we create our life for life's sake" (untranslatable; the original says: *Wie selten machen wir unser Leben mm Leben!).*

And this for my volume of poetry:

"Let us, O beloveds, live as much as possible."

I am unwilling to understand a rule of conduct which does not permit and even teach the greatest, the finest, and the freest use and de-

velopment of all our powers.

Neuchdtel, October

Biography of Lessing. Voltaire seems to have acted shamefully toward him; nothing before had ever so sullied that figure as the story of the Saxon notes. Lessing's arrival in Leipzig is charming: at seventeen he had lived only through books, and that lively and worldly society amazes him; he is a scholar, not a man, and his knowledge embarrasses him. He is Peter Schlemihl without his shadow; he hardly dares bow to people. He came to study theology; he learns to fence and to dance.

I must copy these admirable words of his:

"What constitutes the value of a man is not the truth he possesses or thinks he possesses; it is rather the sincere effort he has made to win that truth. For it is not by possession but by the pursuit of truth that